



When Religion Does Not Work – Consider Belief in Theofatalism

New Radical Accommodation Therapy© for Serenity and Inner Peace

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PREFACE

This work is the culmination of several decades learning to survive and even grow through the most stressful experience anyone can suffer, untimely loss of a beloved spouse. That occurred on September 3, 1985 when I watched my wife die untimely at age fifty-two after living ten years with the threat of breast cancer. When my traditional family belief system provided no comfort, I entered therapy for complicated grief, death anxiety, issues in aging, and depression, which started me on a pathway I could never have imagined. My first therapist suggested that I do some journaling between sessions, which eventually grew into a formal search for information on mental health. Through three decades and publishing several books, I developed a belief system that helped me make sense of the ubiquitous suffering among all of God’s creation. This free ebooklet is a discussion of my work leading to a new form of counseling I call © Radical Accommodation Therapy. I offer it to suffering souls, pastors, therapists and counselors with hope that it will be useful to others who may feel abandoned and betrayed by traditional beliefs about how the world works when it does not work as expected. What readers may think of it is not mine to control. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote, “Don’t judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow.” Therefore, I must sow the seeds wherever they may fall. Namaste.

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INTRODUCTION

Life is not an easy matter. You cannot live through it without falling into frustration and cynicism unless you have before you a great idea which raises you above all kinds of perfidy and baseness.

Leon Trotsky

Religion helps some people navigate life, but what if it fails to deliver? After you get passed the unending mystery of why there is anything existing at all, one is confronted with why things are as they are. Where do you go when you are suffering, and you realize God is causing the suffering? A dangerous problem is the loss of resilience normally provided by faith among those who are religious but not spiritual when life becomes unbearable. Poet, Robert Frost observed that it is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense. The Buddha observed that suffering is the common state of human existence, which is a response to feeling discontent coupled with desire. In his old age, Oedipus could say suffering and time had been “instructors in contentment.” Apostle Paul wrote of his discovery this way, “I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need.” (Philippians 4:11-12) Unfortunately, he did not explain the secret. In short, we can’t always get what we want in life, and what we do get often is very painful. Attachment to desire is the problem; accepting it and letting it go is the solution offered, even if it means letting go of the desire to be happy. When you expect nothing, you will never be disappointed. However, you cannot not desire as the desire not to desire is a desire.

Our culture is not very helpful. Capitalism is driven by discontent and by converting luxuries into necessities. It is based on the assumption that people all are competitive and want the best possible lives for themselves. Setting goals and achieving them is the be all of life in the USA, to focus on the future. Progress through change is rewarded and stagnation is vilified, creating many losers and a few winners enjoying unequal distribution of wealth. It is a very fickle system in which winners can easily and quickly become losers, and losers may never get a break.

In real life, events often do not go as hoped or as planned. The first century Stoic, Epictetus said that adverse events do not disturb people, but their opinions about them do. Change your opinions/thoughts and you change your feelings and promote healing, according to the “mind cure” and “new thought” movements of the last century. These concepts have morphed into the trend towards “positive psychology.” But, if thoughts control feelings and actions, where do thoughts come from and what controls thoughts? That is the ultimate as yet unsolved mystery. When we find out that the world does not possess the value or meaning that we want it to have or that things do not work out the way we expected, some people may find themselves in a crisis with symptoms of depression and anxiety. People suffering such a crisis may seek professional help for their disrupted lives and, psychiatrists may diagnose a psychopathology and prescribe drugs which is not appropriate, when the underlying issue is a problem with understanding God.

The psychiatric Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) included a category entitled Religious or Spiritual Problem (ICD-9-CM, V62.89) For the first time, there is acknowledgment of distressing religious and spiritual experiences as nonpathological problems. According to its author, Dr. David Lukoff, this category can be used when the focus of clinical attention is a religious or spiritual problem. Examples include distressing experiences that involve loss or questioning of faith, problems associated with conversion to a new faith, or questioning of other spiritual values which may not necessarily be related to an organized church or religious institution. (American Psychiatric Association, 1994, p. 685)

Dr. Lukoff notes: “Spiritual distress is the state in which the individual experiences or is at risk of experiencing a disturbance in a belief or value system that is the source of strength and hope. The most important task is to give people in spiritual crisis a positive context for their experiences and sufficient information about the process that they are going through. It is essential that they move away from the concept of disease and recognize the healing nature of their crisis.” Painful spiritual enlightenment has been beneficial in healing deep psychic wounds. Here is a new hopeful therapy for such cases. www.spiritualcompetency.com

Humans are a small step removed from other species that must compete among themselves for survival. Plans do not work out, people disappoint and die, and life is not fair. The earth is a very violent place where wars, diseases, crimes, and geological disasters abound. The assassinated Beatle, John Lennon said life is what happens as you are making other plans. Tribalism and competition – us vs. them - are part of human nature; winners and losers, wars and revolutions are bridled only by government, and that not very effectively. Cognitive behavior therapy (CBT) and dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) and many other therapies were developed to help people deal with life traumas. Such mind treatments have their place, but they are insufficient and unavailable for many sufferers since the mind/body problem still is unsolved. Why they, along with prescription drugs, work for some and not others is unknown. For some suffering people, rational preemptive suicide seems to be a way out when life becomes unbearable. Public-private attempts to understand and prevent suicide still are in the incipient stage. There should be a better way, and maybe there is, for suffering souls to accommodate the world as it is when that is necessary to survive, which is the basic desire of all sentient beings.

Jungian analyst, Dr. James Hollis wrote, “Depression, loss, disease, war, poverty, betrayal, angst, murder, fraud, theft, grief, and so on are part of the human condition from which none of us is exempt. But to move beyond a posture of outrage (and impotence) at life’s suffering, we are called to ask another question: to what present task is this swampland calling me? Asking this question moves us from a posture of victim to engagement with the unfolding of our destiny. When one can let go of the great hidden agenda that drives humanity and its varied histories, then one can begin to encounter the immensity of one’s own soul.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996) Dr. Hollis says we can live without happiness, but not without meaning in our lives. It is precisely our mortality that makes our need for meaning necessary. Some religious people may say life has no meaning apart from the plan of God. The opposing view of nihilism claims there is no meaning in life, it just is whatever it is. Life is a struggle between joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then you die. Life always is fatal. We all must navigate white water on the way to our waterfall, and the closer we get the faster

time seems to accelerate. Nietzsche said, "Those who have a why to live can bear with almost any how." This work offers a reply to the "why?" of life.

There is a belief called theofatalism that offers to make sense of the apparent nonsense and suffering in the world. If suffering in life is inevitable, perhaps it can be understood, and with understanding there may come a greater measure of resilience and inner peace through accommodation of life as it is.

DERIVATION

Theofatalism is belief in the triune prime force in the universe that Generates, Operates, and Destroys everything material and immaterial from atoms to galaxies according to its will, i.e., GOD. As such, it is assumed that nothing happens among all sentient beings outside the will of GOD. This belief system may help people feel good inside whatever happens outside - or not. Theofatalism provides a solution to the ubiquitous question of "why" that has been debated since the dialogues of Plato and Aristotle. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute explanation for what is, what was, and what will be, from atoms to galaxies – no exceptions. Theofatalism has it all covered.

Theofatalism is derived by integrating three concepts:

1) the Hindu concept of Trimurti, i.e., the triune gods Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva recognized as the sources of creation, maintenance, and destruction of all things, These three sources are restated as generator, operator, destroyer. GOD.

2) the concept of theological fatalism, i.e., the existence of an omnipotent power that determines all events past, present, and future, and

3) causal determinism which infers that all events and thoughts are caused by previous events connected in a perfect chain of necessary and sufficient events going back to the First Cause, which leads forward to the inevitability of all things.

Theofatalism consolidates these three precepts into the concept of GOD as generator, operator, destroyer, the prime force in the universe and whatever other universes there may be. Nothing, good or bad, material or immaterial, whether thoughts or actions, happens or does not happen without the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. This concept accommodates all belief systems, past, present, and future as the GOD above gods. Many people cannot accept the "destroyer" aspect of GOD, although they acknowledge natural disasters like floods, fires, tornadoes, hurricanes, droughts, and earthquakes as "acts of God." Theofatalism carries this belief into all forms of suffering, physical, emotional, and mental included. In theofatalism, the only plausible answer to "why?" is GOD's will - from atoms to galaxies; no exceptions.

ORIGINATION

Life is a wonderful opera, except that it hurts.

Joseph Campbell

Theofatalism was developed by Lewis Tagliaferre while he was searching for emotional comfort after the untimely death of his wife in 1985. He thought he could not live without her and the lifestyle that she provided, and he was inconsolable. He made the living and she made the living worthwhile. Losses of several following relationships only deepened his grief and increased the depression that followed. When his traditional faith failed to provide any consolation, it felt like the earth was removed from under him and there was no firm place for him to stand. During the unspeakable grief after untimely death of his wife, British theologian C. S. Lewis wrote, “Nobody told me that grief feels so much like fear. There is not much danger I will stop believing in God. The real danger is that I will come to believe such terrible things about Him. Go to Him when your need is desperate, when all other help is vain, and what do you find. A door slammed in your face and a sound of bolting and double bolting on the other side. After that, silence. You might as well turn aside. Why is He so present a commander in our time of prosperity and so very absent in time of trouble?” (*A Grief Observed*, 1963) Indeed.

C. S. Lewis died shortly after his insurmountable loss. After his wife died, Tagliaferre felt betrayed and abandoned by withdrawal of the church support network he had trusted. Even the church pastor had no words of help because his eldest son had been killed in an auto accident while attending seminary, and he was in irreconcilable grief himself. His faith in the Lord and His people seemed to have forsaken Tagliaferre, just as the apostles ran away when Jesus was crucified. His display of grief seemed to be contagious, and people avoided him. His subsequent loss of faith presented as anger, resentment, emptiness, despair, sadness, and isolation. Although he was an ordained deacon and Sunday school adult teacher, Tagliaferre found no peace in scriptures. So, he set out to find some way to survive the worst grief and post trauma shock imaginable. His life was shattered and, like Humpty-Dumpty, it could not be put back together again. After his counseling with conventional therapies was exhausted and a dozen temporary substitute relationships all ended with even more grief, he expanded the search for inner peace through reading and journaling during his retirement years.

His research for relief spanned the fields of religion, psychology, sociology, cosmology, geology, anthropology, criminology, history, government, and more. He discovered life is hard and complex among the many living species on earth, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Much of the time we are lost in the dismal states of disappointment, guilt, grief, betrayal, doubt, depression, anger, terror and the like. Life is a struggle between opposites including joy and despair, love and fear, trust and betrayal, and then we die. Theofatalism claims that any religion which denies this reality is false and delusional. A father of psychology, Sigmund Freud defined religion as: *A system of wishful illusions together with a disavowal of reality, such as we find nowhere else... a fantasy structure from which a man must be set free if he is to grow to maturity.* He viewed religious beliefs as fantasies that prevent people from coming to terms with how things really are. In contrast, Swiss psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung saw religious practice as a necessary and valuable symbol of a deeper spiritual aspect of being human – in addition to the physical and mental and emotional - that takes many forms throughout human cultures. Tagliaferre concluded that a belief is needed which accommodates the value of Freud’s definition plus supports the basic human need for grounding in spirituality.

THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT

We are not human beings having a spiritual experience; we are spiritual beings having a human experience.

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin

Orthodox Christianity believes in a sovereign creator God, that is, a God who authored reality. God, as author and authority, has the right to institute the rules of behavior for what he created. Theologian Millard Erickson puts it this way: "In the ultimate sense, if there is a supreme being higher than humans or anything else in the created order, he has the right/power to determine what we are to believe and how we are to live. God is the authority in these matters because of who he is. Conversely, this means that we as the creatures are utterly dependent upon our Creator, our author, for meaning....The theological position that views God as author offers additional theological reasons for interpreting or understanding Scripture's literal meaning rather than evaluating it according to human reason, experience, or desires. So, too, with human authors of texts." (*Virkler, Henry A.. Hermeneutics (p. 51 - 76) Baker Publishing Group, 2018 Kindle Edition.*)

Evidence for theofatalism exists in various scriptures of both the Judeo-Christian and Muslim faiths. Christians may say, "God is in control" without really asking what that means. Perhaps the most illustrative is the biblical account of creation with all its bloody predators and prey. "And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good." (Genesis 1: 24-25) The first sacrifice offered by the son of Adam, Abel, that God preferred over the produce of the land offered by his brother, Cain, was a blood offering, the killing of an innocent animal. Sacrificial blood-letting is featured throughout the Bible and reached its peak in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. You probably won't get this in church, but holy scriptures say the Lord does not just allow things to happen; rather He causes them, both good and bad. A few examples suffice:

"The Lord kills and makes alive; The Lord makes poor and makes rich; He brings some low and lifts some up." (1 Samuel 2:6-7) "I make peace and create evil/calamity. I, the Lord, do all these things." (Isaiah 45:7) "When a disaster comes to a city, has not the Lord caused it?" (Amos 3:6) "It is God who directs the lives of his creatures; everyone's life is in his power." (Job 12:10) It seems like this applied to Jesus also. "My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will." (Matthew 26:39) If Jesus could not avoid his destiny, how can we hope to? We are the clay and God is the potter, making some for common use and some for royal use. (Jeremiah 18:2-6, Isaiah 64:8, Romans 9:19-21) The Quran says the same thing to Muslims; "No calamity comes, no affliction occurs, except by the decision and preordainment of Allah." (S:64.11) We may not see God, but we can see (his) creation, and much of it stinks pretty badly.

Indeed, God has a lot of explaining to do. After all, it was God who created the serpent, gave Eve and Adam free will to fall for its temptation to eat the forbidden fruit, and then punished mankind by His own will for being human as He created them in his own image and likeness and knowing what would happen. (Genesis 1:27) The Pope wants to edit the Lord's Prayer because he claims it implies that God causes temptation by pleading, "Lead us not into temptation." (Matthew 6:13) So, who really is to blame here? "There can be only one conclusion: The failure of man and God's expression of suffering was by God's Own Design. Innocent man was designed to fail." (Lolli, William. *Why God Wills You to Suffer (Kindle Locations 1065-1068). eBookIt.com. Kindle Edition.*) It seems that God created sin so He could provide redemption, otherwise the Garden of Eden would be perpetual. We are not to question why.

St. Clement of Alexandria (150-215CE) saw God as ruling with two hands, wielding the power of Satan in one and Christ in the other. (*Evangelicals, take note.*) If Satan rules the world, that must be the will of GOD, or Satan would be more powerful than GOD - which is impossible. You may not understand the full implications of this conclusion until you are impacted by it – just ask Job. Recall from the story in the Old Testament how Job learned that no one may question or challenge the will of GOD. In his utter desolation after losing everything including his health, Job cried out to God, "I am unworthy—how can I reply to you? I put my hand over my mouth. I spoke once, but I have no answer— twice, but I will say no more." (Job 40:4-6) In the ending, God lectured him and his friends on who was in charge, on who created everything, and who did not. The created has no power to control the Creator, and Satan could not create himself. Some scholars say the happy ending was added by scribes later to make it all come out okay. As for us, it may or it may not. Thus, not only suffering, but reaction to suffering must be GOD's will. This idea is threatening to established religious institutions, but the conclusion is inescapable when you really think about it. So, most people refuse to think about it, and churches mostly avoid it. But, that does not change the truth of it; nothing happens outside the will of GOD – from atoms to galaxies.

Here is more biblical evidence. God says He closed the heart of Pharaoh so that Egypt would suffer many plagues imposed by the power He gave to Moses, including death of all the first born sons, before he let the Jews leave their life of slavery. (Exodus 4:21) In order for the Jews to occupy their promised land, God ordered them to destroy all living remnants of the six tribes who were living there at the time, people whom He had created. (Exodus 23: 23-30) God destroyed Saul, first king of Israel, and his son Jonathan in battle because they did not obey his commands, while He crowned David, a murderer and adulterer, to be king and the ancestor of Jesus. Later, the Bible also says it was God's will for Jews to reject Jesus as Messiah and were defeated by Rome in revolts of 69-71CE and 135CE, then ejected from Jerusalem. Their eyes and ears were closed so they would not repent and be saved, and that was their destiny. (Isaiah 6:9-10, Matthew 10:13-15, Mark 4:10-12, 1Peter 2:8) Also, God's will is invoked in daily living. "Go to now, you that say, today or tomorrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and make money: Whereas you know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor, which appears for a little time, and then vanishes away. Therefore, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." (James 4:13-15). "Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the LORD's purpose that prevails." (Proverbs 19:21) Man can move mountains and build and destroy cities, transplant human organs, and make smart phones, lie, cheat, and murder, but only by the will of GOD. No

where is this truth more evident than in the international pandemic of coronavirus sweeping across the world. Mortal fear is an appropriate reaction.

Fear of God is a theme running throughout the Old Testament, and God is depicted by Jesus as not one only to love, but also one to fear. “Fear him who, after your body has been killed, has authority to throw/destroy you (body and soul) into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him.” (Matthew 10:28, Luke 12:5) “It is a fearful/dreadful/terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” (Hebrews 10:30) “Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12) Throughout the Bible, fear views God as punitive to those He chooses, whereas love views God as nurturing to those He chooses. God as love which overcomes fear flows through the New Testament, which requires accommodation of these apparently necessary opposites. Apostle Paul wrote, “I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us (who are predestined, called, chosen, justified, glorified) from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:29-30, 38-39, John 6:65)

This dichotomy seems to be a necessary opposing description of GOD. It can present a logical dilemma to the faithful, i.e., to continue living the illusion that God is only love, or to abandon it for indefinite uncertainty or even atheism. As with Job in the Old Testament, we must say, “The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away...this is the day the Lord has made.” (Job 1:20) You may not like it, but the conclusion is inescapable.

There are only three options: 1) God wants to relieve suffering, but He cannot, 2) God could relieve suffering, but He chooses not to, and 3) God causes suffering. C. G. Jung said, “God is the name by which I designate all things which cross my path violently and recklessly, all things which upset my subjective views, plans and intentions, and change the course of my life for better or for worse....Man’s suffering is not caused by his sin but by his paradoxical God.” Those who claim that, “God is love” (1 John 4:8) overlook that God also is described as a “raging fire.” (Isaiah 30:30, Hebrews 10:37) Many Christians have been deluded with a one-sided vision of God. So, where do you go when you suffer and realize God is causing the suffering? A wider vision is needed to accommodate the real dark side of GOD as generator, operator, destroyer. We must begin with reconciliation of confusing scriptures.

Modern churches all “proof text” scriptures, choosing only the ones for Sunday school lessons and sermons that keep people attending and donating. A thorough study of scriptures discloses much confusion if you take them literally. Consider these two scriptures: Luke 14:25; “Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: If anyone comes to me and does not hate father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even their own life—such a person cannot be my disciple.” 1 John 4:20; “Whoever claims to love God yet hates a brother or sister is a liar. For whoever does not love their brother and sister, whom they have seen, cannot love God, whom they have not seen. And he has given us this command: Anyone who loves God must also love their brother and sister.” Plus these: (John 3:16, 6:44,63) “For God so loved the world he gave his only begotten son so that anyone who believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” “No one can come to me unless the Father calls/enables them.” Compare: Mark 2:17 On hearing this, Jesus said to them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.” Romans 3:22-24 This

righteousness is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God...”

Such apparently contradictory biblical scriptures are open to many different interpretations, called “hermeneutics” by scholars, which considers the historical, cultural, and many other aspects of the writings in determining their meaning and application. Words can be used in literal, figurative, or symbolic senses. This issue makes the Bible very difficult to a suffering critical thinker and possibly misunderstood by the layman. Apparently, it was so at the time of writing by St. Paul. “We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery,” (KJV, 1 Corinthians 14:33) Like all holy books, the Bible can only be accepted on faith, because faith is “confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see...And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him.(Hebrews 11:1- 6) “How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent?” (Romans 10:14) So it appears that faith comes from people hearing preachers who are sent to them, among which there are very wide-ranging interpretations of scriptures. Still, anyone reading any holy books will get a personal message based on their literal content and the perception of the reader in their time and place, all in GOD’s will of course.

For a complete literal commentary, please read the referenced book, *The Bible You Don’t Get in Church*.

The Bible says: “God is not the author of confusion.” (1 Corinthians 2:6–7) Since there is apparent confusion in the Bible about whether it is history, mythology, or theology, and in other holy books and among various religions, Tagliaferre concludes that they all must come from a higher power than any of them, i.e., the supreme force in the universe, GOD above gods – generator, operator, destroyer. Ergo, theofatalism.

SECULAR COROLLARY

What is important in knowledge is not quantity, but quality. It is important to know what knowledge is significant, what is less so, and what is trivial.

Leo Tolstoy

There is no doubt that the mind affects the body and the body affects the mind, whatever the mind may be. Study of the brain/mind is very primitive, hardly better than exploring the moon with a telescope. After centuries of discussion, the mind/body interaction still is poorly defined and is difficult to research in a living brain. Actions, thoughts, and emotions appear to be interrelated in ways not completely understood, but changing one seems to affect the others. Emotions unconsciously precede feelings, are physical, and instinctual reactions. Because they are physical, emotions can be objectively measured by blood flow, brain activity, facial micro-expressions, and body language. Feelings are what happens after having an emotion; they involve thoughts, usually subconscious, and cannot be measured precisely. Dreams reveal contents of the mind that are not accessible when we are awake. Recent discoveries in quantum mechanics and neurology imply that all actions begin unconsciously in the brain immediately before those events are executed in thought or action. A baseball batter has 0.6 seconds to

swing at a coming 90mph fast ball. During that brief time, he must take in information, make assumptions, and take physical actions - all subconsciously. What appears to be conscious decisions are driven by unconscious resources – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. Research in neurology is disclosing that the brain appears to act before human consciousness is aware of it, up to several seconds in some experiments. One report concluded, “People persist in believing that they have access to their own cognitive processes when in fact we do a great deal of automatic unconscious processing before conscious perception occurs.”

Experiments with psychedelic drugs appear to create altered realities that are more comfortable than warranted in stressful and even life-threatening conditions. People with terminal illness who report a near death experience describe loss of fear and a feeling of love, which *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) declares is our normal condition that is submerged in subconscious mind, buried under the dross of daily living with its many challenges. Brain cells do not die instantly after the heart stops beating, so thoughts may continue for seconds or minutes. If thoughts control actions, one may ask, what controls thoughts? Consider the trillions of microscopic processes at the cellular level that are keeping your body alive and functioning. They are not under your conscious control. Since no one consciously controls the organs in their bodies, and the brain is an organ, it is reasonable to assume that the adoption of belief systems and all other thoughts and decisions are driven by forces beyond conscious awareness.

The brain, which controls behavior, is not a static construct. It is estimated to contain a hundred billion neuron cells interconnected through five million kilometers of wiring. It changes in response to accumulated experience and influence, (called neuroplasticity) but apparently by some volition superior to human consciousness. This process is evident in the performance of a great musician, athlete, artist, author, or poet – or a mental patient, criminal or despotic dictator – leaders and followers, employers and employees. Tagliaferre intuited that the brain-body system in all sentient beings acts as if it has a mind of its own that is controlled by the universal triune energy of generation, operation, and destruction, which he called GOD. The brain of Tagliaferre concluded that nothing happens outside the will of GOD – in churches, schools, bedrooms, in hospitals, restaurants, on battlefields, in banks, theaters, prisons, parks, hurricanes, atoms and galaxies – or anywhere. Thus, free will may be an illusion, necessary though the illusion may be at this stage of human evolution. “All that we experience are our own unconscious thoughts, feelings, and beliefs projected onto the world and reflected back, actually causing what we see to happen.” (*Hawkins, David R.. Letting Go, 2012 (p. 211). Hay House. Kindle Edition.*) This effect is clearly shown in the well-known placebo effect that enables plain water and sugar pills to stimulate physical healing when a doctor tells the patient they are medicine. Existence of theofatalism itself - including your reaction to it - illustrates the conclusion.

All actions, large and small, gestate in the subconscious mind before they become conscious. C. G. Jung wrote, “Until you make the unconscious contents conscious, the unconscious contents will direct your life, and you will call it fate.” The discoveries in mind-body medicine suggest that our mind and the thoughts we produce have an incredible impact on our physiology, either positive or negative. If the subconscious contents are exposed, mighty

changes often occur. The brain obeys the mind; therefore, the body tends to manifest what the mind believes or imagines. The brain is, therefore, activated by the mind's intention and not vice versa. Like the top of an iceberg, the conscious mind must go where the subconscious mind takes it, unless some intervention redirects it. In this view, thoughts are the extensions of previous thoughts possibly forgotten and, hence, are inevitable. Some examples follow:

Howard Schultz got the idea for Starbucks coffee houses after viewing similar shops which he visited in Italy. Would Starbucks exist if he had not made that trip? Jeff Bezos got the idea for online retailer, Amazon.com, while driving cross country. Danny Thomas got the idea for St. Jude childrens' hospital while starring in television. Mark Zuckerberg got the idea that became Facebook while he was a sophomore in college. Bill Wilson got the idea for organizing Alcoholics Anonymous and wrote *The Big Book* after a delirium experience with The Oxford Group (now Moral Rearmament) during experimentation with The Belladonna Cure. Travis Kalanick got the idea for Uber while he was carpooling to work. Elon Musk got the idea for SpaceX rockets to Mars while building Tesla electric cars after he emigrated from South Africa by way of Canada. Jimmy Dean got the idea for a sausage business from his brother while he was a country music singer. Joel Osteen got the idea for his prosperity ministry, with no seminary training, after untimely death of his pastor father. Adolf Hitler got the idea for Nazism after failing as a student of architecture following combat service in WWI and caused WWII. Mark David Chapman got the idea to murder Beatle co-founder, John Lennon while he was living in Hawaii. Theodore John Kaczynski got the idea to drop out of society and live as a hermit in opposition to technical modernization, producing home-made bombs that killed three people and wounded eighteen, after earning a Ph.D. degree in mathematics and teaching at the University of Michigan. Bernie Madoff got the idea for a massive illegal Ponzi fraud while he was a stockbroker. Caitlyn (ne: William Bruce) Jenner got the idea to switch gender from male to female at the age of sixty-five after winning the Olympic Decathlon gold medal, marrying three times, and fathering six children. Taylor Swift got the idea to be a music star while she was in middle school. Sherwood Schwartz got the idea for the television sitcom, *Gilligan's Island*, from an assignment in creative writing while he was a student in New York. Greta Thunberg got the idea to advocate for climate change while she was in the eighth grade. Kris Kristofferson got the idea to write country music while he was a captain in the army flying helicopters after being a Rhodes scholar at Oxford. Joseph Smith, Jr. claimed that he got the idea for *The Book of Mormon* from eight golden plates he found under a tree as a youth. Andrew Carnegie (steel) J. P. Morgan (banking), Cornelius Vanderbilt (railroads) and John D. Rockefeller (oil) all got ideas for building wealth while young men. So did Warren Buffet. Donald J. Trump got the idea of being President while he was a real estate developer, and Tagliaferre got the idea of theofatalism during several trips to Sedona, AZ.

These are examples of what renowned psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung called active imagination, i.e., thoughts arising from the subconscious mind. He wrote, "All the works of people (good or bad, important or trivial) originate in their active imagination." Napoleon said imagination rules the world. Albert Einstein equated imagination with intuition. "The only real valuable thing is intuition. There is no logical way to the discovery of these elemental laws." Jung described intuition as "the ability to see around corners." Dr. Jonas Salk, developer of

polio vaccine, said intuition tells thinking minds where to search next. Some personalities are more gifted with intuition than others. Wherever this stimulus goes, actions must follow, whether moral or immoral, legal or not. It is difficult to separate the imagination that creates digital technology, art, music, space travel, and literature from that which creates street gangs and religious faith. Imagination evolves with time, as shown by the collapse of the “flat earth” society and its replacement by space travel. But, how can people have faith in any unprovable belief unless it is given to them from a Higher Power? Churches are populated by people who are given to believe God came to earth through the womb of a virgin, volunteered to be crucified to absorb punishment for the sins of his human creation, resurrected himself from death, and returned to heaven to prepare a place for his chosen people. (John 3:16, 10:17-18, 14:2-3) Imagine that. Willis Carrier, inventor of air conditioning, said to be happy imagine the worst that can happen and plan to accept it. This is, of course, a modern statement of ancient Stoic philosophy taught by Seneca and Epictetus. “Wish for things which happen to be as they are, and you will have a tranquil life.” This rule seems to be unimaginable if you are in acute distress or facing imminent danger. According to this view disease, calamity, and war should be submissively accepted, and it might even be blasphemous to wish them away.

Imagination has no moral compass. It can create bombs to kill more people faster and medicines that heal more people faster. It has no free will. It must be modulated by some superior force for behavioral control, i.e., GOD.

For those who recognize spirit but cringe at religion, consider the concept of causal determinism, which possibly dates back to Plato. In secular terms, for anything to occur the opportunity must precede its recognition which must be followed by action, which must produce results regardless of outcome. All events in every life have a cause that is linked in a chain of events back to the First Cause, which makes everything inevitable. Thoughts also are assumed to be linked to previous thoughts so that if any link in the chain were different, the outcome would be different. Here are some examples:

The world-wide chain of Starbucks coffee shops can be linked to his vacation trip to Italy by founder, Howard Schwartz, to a single coffee bean shop in Seattle, WA he bought from three students from the University of San Francisco in 1971, to discovery of coffee as a beverage, to the creation of coffee plants, to the formation of planet Earth. The world’s largest online reference, Wikipedia, can be linked back to his reading the *World Book* encyclopedia by its founder, Jimmy Wales, (1966) and his subsequent education in finance and back to a one-room school house run by his mother in Alabama. Modern smart cell phones can be linked back to the personal computer created by Steve Jobs (1955-2011) to manufacture of micro-chips by Andrew S. Grove (1936-2016) to invention of the transistor by William B. Shockley, Jr. (1910-1989) to information science developed by Claude Shannon (1916-2001) to fractal geometry explained by Benoit B. Mandelbrot (1924-2010) to the binary arithmetic developed by self-taught mathematician, George Boole (1815-1864) and back to discovery of the precious metals that make them possible. Digital video can be linked back to invention of “moving pictures” by Thomas Edison (1847-1931), back to the discovery of primary colors and the rare earth phosphors that make the visual displays possible, and all the events preceding and

following. A flat tire can be linked back to the rubber manufacturing technology and discovery and harvesting of rubber trees that came together with the nail that is linked back to metallurgy and the creation of iron deposits on earth. (By the way, tires are black from use of carbon black for strength and durability that replaced naturally white zinc oxide that was needed for making brass shells during WWI.) Growth in electric vehicle sales is linked to government mandates for higher mileage which is linked with perception of global warming, invention of electric motors, and the materials that go into them, plus discovery and generation of electricity to charge the batteries. Drug addicts can be linked back to creation of the natural plants and discovery of harvesting them and refining and distributing them by illegal cartels. Modern patented drugs can be linked back to the medicinal herbs from which they are derived and which some people still prefer. The massive financial Ponzi fraud by Bernie Madoff can be linked back to his work as a stockbroker and the investment decisions of his many victims, plus the many errors of financial auditors and law enforcement agencies for several decades. Trips to the moon and space exploration can be linked back to discoveries of Kepler, Brahe, Newton, and Copernicus, possibly even back to discovery of gunpowder made from sulfur, saltpeter (potassium nitrate) and charcoal in China during the Tang dynasty in the ninth century. The Protestant Reformation and plethora of churches can be linked back to the thoughts of Martin Luther which can be linked to policies of the Catholic Church throughout previous centuries. Cognitive behavioral therapy can be linked back to Stoic philosophy in the first century CE. *This work in philosophy can be linked to the death of my wife and all that came before in my life.* All in GOD's will of course, from the doghouse to the White House. Get it?

If any link in the chain of causality in the personal history of each person were different the outcome would be different, hence everything is inevitable and necessary, including getting a flat tire or breaking a fingernail. The same analysis of culminating causality can be applied to all inventions and wars, diseases, disasters, charity, politics, cosmology, marriages, divorces, and everything that occurs each instant of each life on earth, according to laws of science from atoms to galaxies and logical or illogical decisions and beliefs, right down to trimming your tying your shoes and brushing your teeth. Events today among all species on earth - including belief or rejection of theofatalism – apparently are creating causal links moment by moment in the invisible chain of development reaching far into the inevitable, but indefinitely uncertain, future.

Shakespeare wrote in *As You Like It*, “All the world's a stage and men and women merely are the players. They have their exits and their entrances; And one man in his time plays many parts.” Roman Emperor, Marcus Aurelius wrote in the second century CE, “For this is your duty, to act well the part that is given to you; but to select the part belongs to the author.” (*Enchiridion*, p7) We may have no choice. Perhaps we merely are acting a part in a play that is written by GOD without knowing the full script. Albert Einstein said, “Human beings, vegetables, or cosmic dust, we all dance to a mysterious tune intoned in the distance by an invisible player.” Dr. Hollis wrote, “The great rhythms of nature, of time and tide, of fate and destiny, and of our own psyche move their powerful ways quite outside of our will.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996, p.124) The Bible says, “You saw me before I was born and scheduled each day of my life before I began to breathe. Every day of my life was written in your book.” (Psalm 139:16, TLB) Given current knowledge of the DNA molecule, it seems that our lives are scripted at conception and, whether we realize it or not, we must play the role/s we

were given. Thus, all decisions we make are part of the plan of GOD for our lives as was given to our ancestors going back to the original sin of Adam and Eve in the garden when they decided to accept the serpent's temptation and eat the forbidden fruit – which was necessary for GOD to initiate the plan of life that currently exists according to its will. Perhaps the illusion of free will was given as a necessary opposite to offset the unbelievably inevitable walk of life each person must take. (*Trivia: Under current technology, it takes about eighty gigabytes to store one human genome. Genetic testing is the leading edge of modern medicine - aigwoc.*)

Perhaps you need not seek your purpose in life because you cannot avoid it. Someone said, "If you have a pulse, you have a purpose." Consider the Himalayan snow leopard whose purpose seems to be eating mountain goats, and the mountain goat whose purpose is providing food for the snow leopard. The Alaskan tree frog apparently freezes to death during the winter and is resurrected to reproduce each spring. A male lion who takes over a pride after vanquishing the leader kills all the cubs to assure the propagation of his own genes. Bears catch and consume many salmon on their way back upstream to spawn at their place of birth, then leave the carcasses in forests, which provides nutrients for the trees. The osprey bird is programmed to catch fish to feed its young even though it is not an aquatic resident, not like a duck which is. To reproduce its species, a female rhinoceros must bear the weight of the male for forty-five minutes during copulation and then gestate the offspring for fifteen months until birth. The African elephant has such an inefficient digestion it must eat several hundred pounds of vegetation each day, so its refuse provides a convenient source of food for several other species. In Botswana, termite colonies build mounds up to thirty feet high which serve as air conditioners for their underground habitats. Since the animals all must live as GOD programmed them to do, perhaps humans must live as GOD programmed them also. We've all been unwittingly programmed without our conscious assent. When he was asked why he writes only horror books, Stephen King replied, "I have no choice because I cannot imagine doing anything else." He is fortunate that so many people need to be horrified by his books. He must write them, and they must buy them. Countless examples illustrate that your purpose apparently is to be who you are where you are when you are doing what you do and feeling what you feel. Even those in terminal life conditions are providing needs for caregiving services, which sustains a purpose for the providers of those services. Thank GOD for hospice doctors and nurses and the volunteers who help them care for the dying.

It seems that all creatures on earth do what they are destined to do, each playing out the role they are given by GOD, the prime force in the universe – Generator, Operator, Destroyer - thinking and doing what they must even when it leads to their death or to the death of others. Randomness is overcome with essential causality, i.e., there are no accidents or mistakes, there are only predestined choices and inevitable consequences. All decisions are learning experiences, including negative ones. After a thousand experiments failed to disclose a material for his light bulb filament, Thomas Edison declared, "Now I know a thousand things that don't work." Our moments of greatest suffering can be the moments of greatest learning. All in GOD's will of course.

Many people spend their lives regretting the past and fearing the future; therefore, they are unable to experience joy in the present – this author included. Belief in theofatalism offers to cancel the need for remorse and regret for actions in the past because if they could have been different they would have been different; the little things as well as the big things - because GOD does whatever it wants with whoever it wants whenever it wants. Although praise and blame are

necessary opposites, neither one is appropriate, but they must co-exist or it would be different. We may be held accountable in life under civil laws and family traditions, but we are not responsible under GOD for any behavior or thoughts because IT is in control of everything from atoms to galaxies. But, guilt and remorse, like all emotions, must be necessary at this stage of human evolution or they would not exist. The created cannot control the Creator. We are the clay and it is the potter with power to make some for royal use and some for common use. (Romans 9:19-21) This is a non-negotiable fact throughout the universe, knowledge of which begets fear and anger naturally in the process of spiritual growth. You can accept it or reject it, but you cannot change it any more than you can change the laws of physics. Truth is truth whether you believe it or not. Despite this irrefutable conclusion, many people are given the illusion of free will at this stage of human evolution and so they prefer to judge self and others in spite of the instruction from Jesus not to judge, as he came not to judge, except when he did. (Matthew 7:1-2, Matthew 21:11-13, John 8:15-16, 12: 48)

By extension, everything from atoms to galaxies is fulfilling its purpose moment by moment. No exceptions – difficult as that may be to accept. The earth is a very big place with lots of stuff going on and, like grains of sand on all the beaches or drops of water in all the oceans, each individual in all the species is both insignificant and indispensable while doing what it must. Theofatalism is that simple and that complicated because it explains the behavior of all sentient beings and everything else in the universe, from atoms to galaxies. This concept boggles the mind when you think about all the suffering of humanity, plus all other sentient beings. So be not dismayed if it is too much to swallow in one gulp. You may require several readings and repeatedly applying this new idea to your life before it is fully absorbed. All in GOD's will of course (AIGWOC).

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

From his research, Tagliaferre sees the emergence of a common thread leading to five principles of theofatalism. Principles can never be invented, only discovered. The principles of theofatalism are summarized here to stimulate readers to complete their full development by reading the books referenced, to learn them and to make them a part of living every day.

1. Absolute Predeterminism: Everything from atoms to galaxies is happening as it must, or it would be different. The divine will of GOD the Almighty One cannot be disobeyed. It is the utmost arrogance and ignorance to assume that the creature can disobey the Creator, or the clay can control the potter...or the puppet can pull its own strings. Disobeying GOD's will is impossible.

2. Necessary Opposites: For every action there is an equal and opposite reaction; as in physics so in human thoughts and actions. All energy of the universe is distributed about a neutral center like the air in a balloon, with equal power invested in opposing forces manifested in life events. Like a battery with two poles, energy is impotent until the two opposing poles are deployed. Since living Homo sapiens manifest energy in thoughts and behaviors, they, and all material and spiritual forms, must conform to this principle of necessary opposites.

3. Unconscious Decisions: All thoughts begin unconsciously before they become conscious. All behavior is driven from unconscious forces of imagination among and within people who select options presumed to offer more valuable benefits than burdens. All options among choices are selected because the presumed benefits are worth more than the burdens, even though they may be unconscious and seem to be unreasonable or even insane to a rational observer. There are no mistakes, only unconscious choices and inevitable consequences.

4. Indefinite Uncertainty: Life does not grant us certainty, only options and probabilities. Nothing about the future in human affairs can be forecast with accuracy, especially those things that we think we know for sure. The famous American philosopher and baseball star, Yogi Berra once said, "Making predictions is hard, especially when it is about the future." Your grandparents probably could not imagine modern cell phones, so how can we imagine the future? That awareness makes humankind feel anxious necessarily. To be anxious is to be human, because it is a normal reaction to the awareness of indefinite uncertainty.

5. Immaculate Immanence: GOD works a very specific plan for each material element and sentient being that forms a unique and necessary interconnected part of the whole universe. Most of human life is like assembling a jigsaw puzzle without the picture on the box. Each individual sentient being may be only one small insignificant piece, but a necessary indispensable piece or we would not be here. The whole picture composing each life becomes more apparent near completion as we take our place in it. "Immaculate" means without flaw or error and "immanence" means operating within, inherent, present throughout the universe, from atoms to galaxies. No, this is not the same god as the one in any holy books. It is the Generator, Operator, Destroyer. GOD

Theofatalism accommodates both acceptance and rejection of this reasoning and adoption of other belief systems as being necessary or they would not exist. Everything in the universe is represented by its equal and opposite, depicted by words called antonyms, i.e., up and down, in and out, sweet and sour, good and evil, male and female, anima and animus, cold and hot, pessimism and optimism, content and discontent, predator and prey, criminal and victim, love and hate, joy and suffering, sickness and health, rich and poor, pain and pleasure, positive and negative, light and dark, truth and falsity, first and last, win and lose, war and peace, birth and death, first and last, maze and labyrinth, order and chaos, optimism and pessimism, cooperation and competition, introvert and extravert, random and destined, predestination and free will, heaven and hell, trust and betrayal, indispensable and insignificant, beginning and ending, Christ and Satan - as in the ancient symbol of Yin and Yang. And the biggest dichotomy of all: creation and destruction.

Apart from their opposites, everything is meaningless, like one hand clapping. C. G. Jung wrote, "Even a happy life cannot be without a measure of darkness, and the word "happy" would lose its meaning if it were not balanced by sadness." Many churches seem to avoid this necessary dichotomy and present their dogma in a one-sided package of happiness with the Lord, in the life to come if not in this one. Indeed, all theology must by definition offer a measure of happiness to be accepted. But, we all must live in a world of both benefits and burdens, heaven and hell, all balanced in the universal One. GOD did not make any one-sided coins. "Unhappiness itself is

not the problem—it is an inherent and unavoidable part of being alive. Rather, it’s the harshly negative views of ourselves that can be switched on by unhappy moods that entangle us. Not only do they affect our mind, they also have profound effects on our body—and then the body in turn has profound effects on the mind and emotions.” *Williams, Mark. The Mindful Way through Depression: Freeing Yourself from Chronic Unhappiness (p. 22). Guilford Publications. Kindle Edition.*

F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) wrote, “It is a mark of maturity to hold the opposites and still function normally” – including acceptance and rejection of theofatalism - all in GOD’s will of course.

THE SYMBOL

C. G. Jung said there is the thing and the symbol of the thing. Whereas the Catholic symbol is the crucifix and the Protestant symbol is the empty cross, the symbol of theofatalism chosen by Tagliaferre is the Chartres Labyrinth (ca.1200 CE) in which there is only one pathway for each animate being to follow. Dr. Jung wrote, “*The way is within us, but not in Gods nor in teachings, nor in laws. Within us is the way, the truth, and the life.*” (*Redbook*, p.231) He had five children and observed, “Your pathway is not my pathway; therefore, I cannot teach you. The pathway is within you.” Parents who can only watch their children and descendants walk the pathways they are given may understand and agree. The late mythologist, Joseph Campbell may have described this pathway in his



instruction to “follow your bliss.” He wrote, “If you follow your bliss, you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. Wherever you are—if you are following your bliss, you are enjoying that refreshment, that life within you, all the time.” The Rev. Lauren Artress wrote, “Walking the Labyrinth has reemerged today as a metaphor for the spiritual journey and a powerful tool for transformation. This walking meditation is an archetype, a mystical ritual found in many religious traditions. It quiets the mind and opens the soul. Each step unites faith and action as walkers take one step at a time, living in trust and willingness to follow the life course set before them.” (*Walking a Labyrinth – 2011*) You can buy a labyrinth in several forms at www.bwatsonstudios.com.

Unlike the dead-ends and random pathways of a maze, which is intentionally designed to confuse and frustrate, the labyrinth has no barriers, there are no shortcuts, and it definitely is not a random walk, because everyone one must take the steps before them. We may stumble along the way and encounter dangers and stress, sun and shadow, storms and calms, but the pathway ahead always beckons; begin and continue. The labyrinth symbolizes how we emerge from the source when spirits incarnate in the body and traverse through four stages of infancy,

childhood, youth, adulthood and then after midlife we return to the source through four stages of maturity, seniority, contemplation and mortality. Four seems to be a significant number because it occurs 278 times in the Old Testament and sixty-one times in the New Testament. The four bodily humors were part of Shakespearean cosmology, inherited from the ancient Greek philosophers Aristotle, Hippocrates, and Galen. Organized around the four elements of earth, water, air, and fire; the four qualities of cold, hot, moist, and dry; four temperaments, and the four humors, these physical qualities assumed the behavior of all created things including the human body. There are four dimensions in the laws of physics, four points to the compass, four seasons, etc. German philosopher, Arthur Schopenhauer saw men in four classes: the working masses who must strive for basic existence leaving no time for anything more, family men who work for wives and children, creating an estate for their descendants, learners and teachers who see their role in history and the larger world view, and wise old sages, philosophers, observing the world but no longer participating.

The four quadrants of a labyrinth symbolize the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual (four) aspects of mankind. They also represent the four functions of personality – sensing, thinking, feeling and intuition - described by the personality model of C. G. Jung and implemented in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). (*I am INTJ*) The walk of life traverses these four quadrants from infancy to mortality, each person on their own inevitable predestined pathway. For applications of the Jungian personality model in therapy, visit www.16personalities.com, www.personalitypage.com and www.mbtionline.com.

At the end of life, death may be a transition of eternal energy from the physical to the spiritual form– all in the process of becoming more human. Scripture says, “Even though our outer nature is wasting away, our inner nature is being renewed day by day...For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens....oh death, where is thy victory, oh death, where is thy sting?” (1 Corinthians 15:55, 2 Corinthians 4:16, 5:1) Dying is relatively easy; trying not to is hard, painful, and expensive. Stanford University professor emeritus, Irvin Yalom described contemplating our own death in his book, *Staring at the Sun* (2009), as peeking in small squints through a dense filter and maybe not discussing it at all. He wrote, “Life is a spark between two identical voids, the darkness before birth and the one after death.” Denial of death is a poorly understood defense mechanism, but it is real. So, many people cannot make a will or appoint someone with power of attorney to manage their affairs after they no longer can. The late founder of Apple, Inc., Steve Jobs observed that even those who think they are going to heaven don’t want to die to get there. His family said his last words were, “Oh wow, oh wow.” Anthropologist, Margaret Mead said, “When someone dies, we pretend nothing happened.” But something very big happens, and the world scarcely takes notice. All in GOD’s will of course.

James Baldwin (1924-1987) wrote in *The Fire Next Time*, (1963) “Life is tragic simply because the earth turns and the sun inexorably rises and sets, and one day, for each of us, the sun will go down for the last time.” Inner peace comes after total surrender to what is inevitable. The late psychiatrist, Elizabeth Kubler-Ross saw terminal patients walking through stages of shock, denial, anger, bargaining, and depression to reach acceptance of their final condition. All beginnings come with endings. “Build your nest high as the eagle, and I will bring you down,” says the Lord. (Jeremiah 49:16) Each of us is marked for tragedy. Everyone is a dead person walking. How we resolve this decidedly human complex of carrying out our

daily lives while burdened by our inescapable mortality determines our essential character. In the end there is only surrender as nothing else matters in reaching the fulfillment of our destiny. We must follow the late actor Charlton Heston who said, "I must reconcile equal measures of courage and surrender." *A Course in Miracles* states, "In my defenselessness, my safety (and inner peace) lies...the presence of fear is a sure sign you are trusting in your own (ego) strength." Death in this spiritual setting indicates a total surrender of ego, giving up our own desires to submit fully to the will of GOD in our lives, including whatever suffering that might include. Dr. David DeRose wrote, "Indeed, it's only during the storms of life that many of us finally realize our need to fully surrender to the GOD of the universe." *DeRose MD MPH, David. Thirty Days to Natural Blood Pressure Control: The "No Pressure" Solution (p. 365). CompassHealth Consulting Press. Kindle Edition.* We may need to transcend strong emotions of fear and anger to fully achieve such surrender to the inevitable life that is programmed for us at the instant of conception by the will of GOD.

We may be made to fight for immortality, but mortality always wins, and what comes after is indefinitely uncertain. Sometimes, medicine just gets in the way of it. Half of all Americans die by age eighty, and most of the rest die by age ninety. The vast majority of funding for medical research goes into keeping people alive longer, not keeping people healthier or happier as long as they live. It is difficult for doctors, patients, and families to decide how much suffering is enough because we do not have a tradition to mark the beginning of dying. Medical treatment options increasingly are determined by financial considerations, insurance coverage, and government assistance unless families are united in their preferences. End of life suffering and post trauma shock can ruin families financially and emotionally for the rest of their lives. Sometimes, medical decisions become so contentious they end up in court. We need a ritual for death as a rite of passage, not as an ending, but as a passage from here to what nobody knows. It is the final exit from a pathway that each of us must walk through alone in our own time and in our own way. More people are choosing their own time and means of departure, commanding doctors Do Not Resuscitate, and medical ethics and legislation are changing to accommodate them. Declining treatment, entering hospice, and refusing food and drink are reasonable choices to limit suffering for some. California, Oregon, Montana, Colorado, Vermont, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey and District of Columbia have legalized physician prescribed suicide. For more information visit, www.finalexit.org. In dying, as in living, people will walk the pathway of the labyrinth they have been given, and survivors will live with the results. Fighting GOD is exhausting, but if you must, you must. All in GOD's will of course.

CRITICISM

Religion is the opiate of the masses.
Karl Marx

If you would be a real seeker after truth, it is necessary that at least once in your life you doubt, as far as possible, all things.

Rene Descartes

Hope is the worst of all evils for it prolongs the torments of man.
Friedrich Nietzsche

Every new idea must survive opposition and rejection before it is accepted. Those readers who cannot accept the conclusion may need to find flaws in the logic or interpretations of communications, called hermeneutics. Criticism of theofatalism lies primarily in its apparent negation of conscious free will, which presents a formidable hurdle to its acceptance. Assumption of free will is the international basis for jurisprudence because without it there would be no justification for laws or their enforcement. Without free will, this argument claims all actions would be robotic, and people could not be held responsible for the results of their uncontrollable impulses. All human governance would be impotent without assuming free will, and people would be driven by instincts alone – just like they were before the ten commandments were given to Moses. Apostle Paul wrote: “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.” (Romans 13:1-7) “Submit yourselves for the Lord’s sake to every human authority: whether to the emperor, as the supreme authority, or to governors, who are sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to commend those who do right.” (1 Peter 2: 13-17) As with most scriptures, this instruction must be weighed carefully in the context of its time and place for modern interpretation. Without assuming free will, the rule of law is made a mockery, and theofatalism is a one-sided argument for determinism. However, “law enforcement” is an oxymoron because criminals are free to break the law. The first Christians refused to deny Christ and worship Caesar, so they were persecuted and martyred for their disobedience until the fourth century when Emperor Constantine legalized all religions in the Edict of Milan in 313CE. All in GOD’s will of course.

Proponents of free will may argue that the negation of free will, or its falsification, would mean that God is a liar and not worthy of belief. Some scriptures claim free will is a gift from God, for it lets people love and obey Him because they choose to do so, under penalty of hell. (Matthew 22:37, Luke 12: 5, John 3:16,14:15). However, free will is negated in other scriptures, as Jesus declared to his twelve apostles, “You did not choose me, I chose you.” “No one can come to me (Jesus) unless the Father calls/enables/grants/calls them...and no one can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.” (John 6:44,65, 1 Corinthians 12:3) The New Testament describes Christians as “the chosen” thirty-eight times. (Matthew 22:14, Mark 13:20, Luke 18:7, John 6:37,44,65, 15:16, 19, Acts 22:14, Romans 11:5, Ephesians 1:11) Thus, early Christian church membership apparently was not voluntary.

Another criticism of theofatalism involves possibly confusing correlation with causation, a common error in research. Just because two events are related does not mean they are causative. For example, telomeres on the ends of chromosomes are depleted with aging. This could be a cause of aging - but aging also seems to be related to genes and environmental factors, diet, etc., so maybe loss of telomeres is a consequence of aging and not the cause. Certain chemical changes in the brain are observed in people with depression, but whether they are the causes or the results of depression is unknown. In addition, experiments in quantum mechanics demonstrate that there is an instantaneous connection between subatomic particles regardless how far away they are from one another – what Einstein called “spooky things at a distance.” Thus, correlations may well be causations while causations may not require apparent

connections. The universe may be seen as ONE, with energy and matter being interchangeable in the famous equation by Albert Einstein, making all human events inevitably interconnected.

Consider this life story: (*Wikipedia*) Eckhart Tolle was born in Germany in 1948. His parents separated at his age of twelve, and his father self-schooled him in Spain. At age eighteen, he migrated to UK where he studied philosophy at the University of London. He suffered extended depression until at age twenty-nine he had a spiritual epiphany after which he migrated to Vancouver, Canada and eventually married an Asian woman. In 1997 he published his Buddhist-based book, *The Power of Now*, which sold less than 3,000 copies. In 2000, the book was endorsed by Oprah Winfrey and became an international best seller, translated into many languages. Now, Tolle is rich and famous. Considering all the sequential events, this outcome is inevitable. If any link in the chain had been different the outcome would be different. There are countless examples like this in every life on earth. Whatever is must be necessary, or it would be different.

Here is another life story: Popular actor, Kelsey Grammer, whose father was murdered in a household invasion, whose only sister was kidnapped, raped, and murdered, whose two step-brothers drowned in a scuba diving accident, won a full scholarship to the Julliard School in New York but was expelled for truancy. He worked temporary jobs in theater until he landed a leading role in the TV sitcom *Cheers*, followed by its most successful spinoff, *Frasier*, winning many awards. Grammer was married four times and had other affairs, sired seven children and was a drug abuser and alcoholic, possibly related to his family tragedies. But, he became a most successful movie, theater, and television star, plus a director and producer, thanks to many enablers and fans...all in GOD's will of course. Grammer said, "What does not kill you makes you stronger."

One more story: Dr. Helen Schucman and Dr. William Thetford channeled *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM) from Jesus while they were professors of medical psychology at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center in New York. After noting all the strife in their world, they concluded "there should be another way," and they collaborated on it, beginning in June, 1965. But the *Course* is so heretical, Helen disclaimed it and stored the manuscript in her apartment closet. She later claimed atheism. Through their mutual friend, Father Groeshel, Dr. Kenneth Wapnick was informed of the manuscript. He changed his plans about moving to Israel, and the *Course* became his life career, organizing The Foundation for A Course in Miracles with Judith Skutch Whitson, which edited and published it in 1975. Helen died in 1981 (age 71), Thetford died in 1988, (age 65) and Kenneth died in 2013, (age 71), and none of them were enriched by their seminal work. Now the *Course* is translated into two dozen languages, books are written about it, and teachers are presenting it to people who are ready to receive it worldwide. All in GOD's will of course.

Consider how Australian zoologist/ naturalist, Steve Irwin was killed by a stingray's thrust to his heart while scuba diving to study its habitat. Terri, his widow, never remarried because she said, "I have had my happy ever after." C. G. Jung defined events seemingly unconnected but causative as "synchronicity." There may be no coincidences, only "godincidences," what one writer called "God Jobs." Although he did not believe in any afterlife, Albert Einstein believed that a physical reality exists independent of our ability to

observe it. The existence of undetectable “dark matter” and “dark energy” now is accepted science. There is more to the universe than can be discerned by human senses. Research in neurology has uncovered “mirror neurons” in the brain which activate emotions in a person who is merely observing the said emotions in another person. Contagious yawning has been observed in several sentient species, including humans. Emotional contagion and “group think” are subjects of high interest in psychology of social media. UK biologist, Dr. Rupert Sheldrake proposed the existence of non-material morphic energy fields to explain this phenomenon. (*A New Science of Life, 1995*) If you are sensitive enough, you may feel this energy with loved ones or a pet. Animals appear to be more sensitive to it than are humans. Extraverts draw energy from other people while introverts seem to recharge from within. Western society rewards extraverts and punishes introverts, but it is not so in Eastern cultures where the reverse is more likely.

At any moment you are transmitting and receiving energy as thoughts and emotions. The morphic energy field has traditionally been called an “aura” as detectable in Kirlian photography. It can be seen by people who have been born with psychic gifts or learned the ability to see vibrations of that radiation. The practice of Chinese medicine called Qigong assumes a vitalistic energy called *qi* (or chi) that permeates all living things and provides the basis for acupuncture treatment. Morphic energy may help to explain the lifestyle similarities seen in studies of twins who were separated at birth and in the illegal behavior of criminal gangs. Contagious ideas, called memes, may be driven by morphic energy. This is the best explanation for the popular appeal of celebrities, religious gurus, and international leaders. Competitive sports fans expend memetic energy that otherwise would be expended in gangs and wars to meet opposing human needs for competition and cooperation. It also could help to understand what Jesus meant when he stated the law of reciprocity: “Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.” (Luke 6:38) What you transmit, you receive like in a mirror. ACIM says to transmit only love, to ask Holy Spirit to convert our “special relationships” to “holy relationships” through acceptance and forgiveness where each one looks inward and sees no lack in themselves. Love is inevitably attracted to love, fear to fear. Infants are born with only unconditional love, but it soon becomes contaminated by interventions from the world. Thus, humans develop a dark side that leads to suffering and grief which is influenced by the polarity of energy in our environments. This can be seen in the human ghettos as well as in their opposites, i.e., “birds of a feather flock together.” Jesus said one must return to the innocence of a child to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. (Matthew 18:3, 19:14) The gifts of GOD – positive and negative - are energetic or spiritual as well as material. Since, by the law of universal conservation, energy can neither be created nor destroyed, perhaps death of the body does not extinguish this energetic existence which continues in its nonmaterial form while the elements of the body return to earth.

Theofatalism acknowledges the opposing views of free will and determinism as necessary opposites. The Bible contains scriptures evoking both ideas. For details, read the referenced book titled, *The Bible You Don't Get in Church*. Theofatalism postulates that whatever people believe or eventually discover – in science, economics, psychology, politics, religion, etc. - it is the consequence of the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. The renowned scientist Albert Einstein said, “Man can will what he wants, but he cannot will what

he wills.” We have no free will, so we must believe in free will. Nothing happens outside the will of GOD, including the rejection of theofatalism and adoption of many other beliefs. GOD makes atheists, too.

A NEW THERAPY – FIVE STEPS TO INNER PEACE

The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence.

Rabindranath Tagore

A new idea is only as valuable as it can be useful. As it is said in self-help book publishing, so what, now what? What can a person do with this knowledge?...how can it help suffering souls in mortal pain??...those who are desperate for things to be different??? Belief in theofatalism leads to a new therapy for suffering souls who need help walking through their labyrinth of life. We are taught a formula for life that says, “do this, get that.” Sometimes it works and sometimes not. A tattoo text says, “What beautiful lies you’ve been told. What terrible truths drown your soul.” There is possibly no worse shock than to trust in a personal faith that is impotent when needed the most during the painful trials of life. Pain seems to be essential for survival. Pain is the tangible material that creeps into our mind and screams at us to recognize that something is terribly wrong. When things do not go as planned, what then? Living in harmony with the reality we do not create, that is the key. It follows from this discussion that to feel a measure of inner peace and serenity while living in the world as it is, one might employ ©Radical Accommodation Therapy in five ADTDA steps. There are only two rules to follow in their application to life: begin and continue. (*Disclaimer: This is not a substitute for qualified mental health care by a professional.*)

- 1) *Accept* everything as it is moment by moment here and now, including your personal reaction, because it must be necessary or it would be different,
- 2) *Detach* from what you cannot change and wish was different and forgive your adversary because it hurts too much not to...you did not cause it and you cannot fix it.
- 3) *Transcend* the need for control because you don’t have any as the brain has a mind of its own,
- 4) *Don’t fight* with GOD because you cannot win – but if you fight that also is inevitable because you must walk the labyrinth you are given, and
- 5) *Assume* there are no mistakes, only predestined choices and necessary consequences. Every decision is a necessary learning experience.

This new therapy comes with a single, but very powerful affirmation for inner peace no matter that happens outside: ***GOD – generator, operator, destroyer - grants me willingness to accept what I cannot change, the knowledge, courage and ability to do what I must, and the assurance that I am indispensable to the universe.***

Of course, this affirmation is easier to practice under mild stress than during a life-threatening situation or when you desperately wish things were different. If everything – including you - is as it must be, then there is nothing to do differently than you are doing – apparently a paradox. Jesus declared, “In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I

have overcome the world.” (John 16:33) That may be little consolation if you are sick, homeless and hungry and alone and you are devastated by grief and war. He may have overcome the world, but we still must live in it through the evolution of plant, animal, and man until our departure is required. That is when this affirmation is needed most. Implementing the steps is encouraged by praise, empathy, attention, and approval (PEAA), four human needs that go a long way toward soothing the suffering soul. The transformation from infantile faith to mature reality takes a lot of patience and persistence and practice in all things – mild and severe. But the endurance can pay off in transforming the ego from selfish to selfless. The ego, i.e., the self or soul/psyche, apparently must be crucified in order to see GOD in all things, and it does not go willingly unless some painful intervention makes it so to overcome its wilfulness.

The Old Testament says God wants a broken and contrite heart into which He can pour love and compassion for all sentient beings. (Psalm 51:16-18) Divine love apparently cannot be known until the self is crucified, and sometimes it seems to require a war within. Jesus said there is no greater love than to give your life for your friends. (John 15:13) He also commanded the disciples to love their enemies and their neighbors as themselves. (Matthew 5:43-48) But then, he ordered his disciples to hate their families and even themselves and give up everything to follow him. (Luke 14:26) In response, the traditional hymn says, “I surrender all...” After all, that is the main goal, isn’t it – to detach from all desire, including the desire to detach, turning “my will” into “thy will,” as did Jesus facing the cross. (Luke 22:42) That was the time when “darkness reigned over the earth.” The Bible says he returned after his suffering in a new form, and so possibly can we who also walk the labyrinth we are given as we experience life and return to our source. You become progressively more of a witness to life rather than the actor during the drama in old age. To be patient under all circumstances and to accept all conditions as necessary factors in your training, that is wisdom – even when you feel brutalized by acts of GOD. Resisting the inevitable is the root cause of suffering when we believe that we are our bodies. Bodies come and go, but the Bible and other religious books claim the spirit is eternal and never dies. Jesus said, “The spirit gives life, the flesh counts for nothing.” (John 6:63) So, death of the body may not be the real you dying – no big deal. If you select self-identity with investment and attachment to the temporary body and its life on earth, distress will come with its deterioration and demise. When we identify with the body, all our animal instincts take over, and the world becomes a jungle – all in GOD’s will of course.

The response of Jesus to adversity was radical acceptance. If someone slaps your cheek turn the other, if someone takes your coat give them your cloak also, if a soldier demands you carry his pack a mile carry it two miles, if someone borrows something do not demand it back, love your enemies, do good to those who harm you, forgive repeatedly those who ask, pay what you owe to God and man, and give up your life for your friends, take up your cross and follow him. “Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked.” (Matthew 5, Luke 6) This instruction may sound foolish or impossible and is avoided by modern churches and New Age preachers, but “with God all things are possible.” So, as it is practiced in 12-step programs, “let go and let GOD,” for whom and through whom all things exist. (Hebrews 2:10) One must die to his past and to his old ego before he can enter the spiritual life into which he was born. One must be “born again.” This new form of therapy may be a powerful advance in human evolution, i.e., “a giant leap for mankind.” Its discovery and use (or not) in counseling troubled people is, of course, the will of GOD, the Generator, Operator, Destroyer of everything from atoms to galaxies.

APPLICATION to LIFE

Don't judge the day by the harvest you reap, rather by the seeds that you sow.

Robert Louis Stevenson

In spite of all my uncertainties, I feel a solidity underlying all existence and a continuity in my mode of being.

C. G. Jung

The world is not something in which certainty is possible...and therefore you must learn to act on things which you still very much doubt.

Bertrand Russell

While hanging on the cross, Jesus lamented, “Why have you forsaken me?” If the Son of God felt abandoned in his peak time of need, what shall we make of this God who would sacrifice his only son to correct a decision He made to give mankind free will, knowing what the outcome would be? After his suffering, Jesus was immortalized and became the symbol of a religion that fails to bring serenity and inner peace to the world. Surely, God could have created a different kind of world if He willed. Or could He? Evil exists, and we must accommodate it as being necessary, or it would not exist – much as ACIM would have us believe there is only love. Reality just does not support that thesis. We experience both benefits and burdens at the will of GOD – Generator, Operator, Destroyer. But, even burdens come with benefits. “We also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.” (Romans 5:3) Pema Chodron wrote, “The spiritual journey involves going beyond hope and fear, stepping into unknown territory, continually moving forward.” Walking our own labyrinth is the pathway within, and no one can do it for us.

A letter to C. G. Jung from a former patient reads as follows: “Out of evil, much good has come to me. By keeping quiet, repressing nothing, remaining attentive, and by accepting reality—taking things as they are, and not as I wanted them to be—by doing all this, unusual knowledge has come to me, and unusual powers as well, such as I could never have imagined before. I always thought that when we accepted things, they overpowered us in some way or other. This turns out not to be true at all, and it is only by accepting them that one can assume an attitude towards them. What a fool I was! How I tried to force everything to go according to the way I thought it ought to! So now I intend to play the game of life, being receptive to whatever comes to me, good and bad, sun and shadow that are forever alternating, and, in this way, also accepting my own nature with its positive and negative sides. Thus, everything becomes more alive to me.” (*Commentary of the Secret of the Golden Flower.*)

The Psalmist wrote, “Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil...” (Psalm 23:4) *A Course in Miracles* states, “What could you not accept if you but knew everything that happens is for your good? Disobeying God’s will is meaningful only to the insane. In truth, it is impossible... all actions are either a call for love or an expression of love.”

The man who watched his wife swept away and lost his house in hurricane Dorian, the immigrant woman who watched her husband and infant daughter drown in the Rio Grande, warriors who see their buddies killed and disabled in battle and return with post trauma shock, parents who lose their kids to illegal drugs, people who are driven into bankruptcy by medical bills, and homeless refugees who are driven from their demolished countries by civil war might find this idea difficult to accept. The “*Course*” claims that releasing fear leaves only love. But, one cannot exist without the other. Fear and love appear to be necessary opposites we cannot live without. We may need a different outlook to make it through the walk of life we are given that accommodates both of these necessary opposites.

Life moves on whether you want it to or not. Psychiatrist, Victor Frankl lost his pregnant wife and family in the Nazi holocaust and survived the concentration camps to write that life can take away everything but your reaction to it. Millions were lost in the gas chambers, but he remarried and lived with his new family for decades in relative health and prosperity. If you hold on to the past, grasping onto what no longer exists, you’ll create suffering for yourself and others. But if you let go, who knows? Can you let go of the pain and hold onto only the pleasure, then die with a smile on your face? Charles Dickens (1812-1870) wrote, “Reflect upon your present blessings, of which everyone has many, not on your past misfortunes, of which everyone has some.” Mindfulness therapy claims that living in the past invites depression and living in the future invites anxiety – but if you must, you must. Living mindfully here and now moment by moment clears the soul from all manner of perfidy and baseness – if you can. When you live here and now, depression caused by dwelling on the past and anxiety caused by fear of the future are impossible with the conviction, or insight, that the immediate *now*, whatever its nature, is the goal and fulfillment of all living things. Jesus instructed not to worry about tomorrow because the problems of today are enough, so why borrow trouble? (Matthew 6:25-34) The past is gone and the future is not yet, so all we have is now. Living in the past or the future does not change anything, and worry can impact resilience needed today. You can assume that everyone is doing the best they can under their circumstances, including those who cause others to suffer. However, Jesus sweat drops as blood in anguish anticipating his suffering and death on the cross. (Luke 22:44) But, after his season of suffering came the resurrection into new life. This story is repeated in many cultures as the myth of the “hero’s journey” into darkness and return to life in a new form with confident assurance of its divinity. So, be patient and kind to yourself during your season of suffering because you have the right to be here and, no doubt, your life is unfolding as it must. All in GOD’s will of course.

Poet, Robert Frost lost his wife and four children by his age sixty-six and lived to age eighty-eight to think about it. His remaining daughter shunned him, and he lived alone with a housekeeper. He said, “It is hard to get into this world and hard to get out and what lies in between makes no sense.” One literary critic wrote, “Frost's best work explores fundamental questions of existence, depicting with chilling starkness the loneliness of the individual in an indifferent universe.” Frost wrote, “Lord, please forgive my many little jokes on thee, and I will forgive thy great big joke on me.” His epitaph states, “I had a lover’s quarrel with the world.”

The best meditation upon GOD may be the name of God given to Moses: “I AM who I am – here and now” because that is all we have for sure. (Exodus 3:13-14) It also focuses on the spirit and not the temporary body. Meditating on the mantra – I Am Fully Relying on GOD - here and now - sustains belief in the highest of the highest powers in the universe and helps

create inner peace and serenity during times of personal suffering and insecurity for those who are destined to receive it.

C. G. Jung said many of his troubled patients lost contact with whatever resilience was provided by their faith, and no one recovered who did not regain it, i.e., “they made peace with GOD.” “Be thankful in all circumstances because this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (1 Thessalonians 5:18) St. Paul wrote that to Christians who were being crucified for their refusal to worship Caesar. It is not clear if he was referring to thankfulness as God’s will or to all circumstances as God’s will – perhaps, both. Perhaps he was aware that Greek philosopher Cicero said, “Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, it is the parent of all the others.” If nothing else, we can be thankful for each day that is one less to suffer on our walk through the labyrinth we are given. Some people thank God for being healed. Can you thank GOD for being harmed? Despite their distress, or possibly because of it, Paul instructed persecuted Christians to think of things that are “true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent and praiseworthy.” (Philippians 4:8) We are not self-sufficient. We did not create ourselves nor anything else. We may not even create our own thoughts and emotions. We depend on parents, friends, society, the earth, GOD, the universe and even the government to provide what we cannot provide for ourselves. BUT, what if GOD gives and also takes away? All beginnings come with endings. Seeing with grateful eyes requires that we see the web of interconnection in which we alternate between being givers and receivers.

The self-reliance so highly valued in our culture is based on the illusion of free will. “I thank whatever gods may be for my unconquerable soul. I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul.” BUT, from atoms to galaxies, nothing happens outside the will of GOD – including our thoughts about it and the poem, *Invictus*, by William Ernest Henley.

This outlook requires a personal transformation to accommodate the world as it is for every sentient being – plant, animal, and human. Jung proposed the second half of life is preparation for the personal development leading to a transition from physical to spiritual that he called “individuation,” i.e., removing the dross of life to rediscover who you were born to be. He declared, “Those who look outward dream, those who look inward awake.” Often, this process is initiated when life slaps you in the face to get your attention, sometimes called a “mid-life or existential crisis.” What matters most is the awakening of your own soul, discovery of subconscious content through mature insight. This process involves knowing your native personality type and accepting a lifestyle in physical, mental, emotional and spiritual aspects that is most compatible with it. (Visit www.16personalities.com) Alan Cohen wrote, “Your task is not to roam the earth seeking someone smarter than you to tell you what to do. Your task is to dive into your heart and remember what you know. The ultimate guru lives within you... Let the world know you as you are, not as you think you should be...” (*Cohen, Alan. A Course in Miracles Made Easy* (p. 119). Hay House.2015 Kindle Edition.)

ACIM describes a holy relationship as one between two people who have looked inward and, finding no lack, are able to share the world independently with mutual acceptance of each other as they are through love and forgiveness. The transformation requires examination of the influence of your family, what you learned in school and the social environment you lived in, your work life, and your natural personality to uncover your authentic self – physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual as a child of GOD, created without sin hence needing no punishment. Jesus declared, “Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.... Truly I tell you, unless

you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 18:3, 19:14) They must not be born sinners to make this work.

Telling our personal stories allows us to pay tribute to all the various people in our lives – parents, teachers, coaches, friends, spouses, children, and siblings – who contributed to our journey on the labyrinth pathway of life. Because everyone sees the world through their own unique filter, roles, and social conditioning, there may really be few completely authentic people having authentic relationships because they are more “human doings” than human beings. Shakespeare penned this instruction by Polonius to Hamlet, “This above all: To thine own self be true, and it follows as night the day thou canst not be false to anyone.” The oracle at Delphi instructed, “Know thyself.” All journeys outward ultimately lead to the journey inward. This inner work is hard, but Socrates said the unexamined life is not worth living. Unfortunately, it may require the help of a therapist or pastoral counselor, which most people never obtain. Whether you do the inner work or you don’t must be the will of GOD, of course.

C. G. Jung said, “The way to yourself is the longest way and the hardest way. Everybody would pay anything, his whole fortune, to avoid going to himself. Most people hate themselves, and for nothing in the world would they go where they are, where their native town is, because it is just hell. The dread and resistance every natural human being experiences when it comes to delving deeply into himself is, at bottom, the fear of the journey to Hades.” (*The Vision Seminars*, vol 1, p. 30) Founder of DBT, Dr. Marsha Linehan wrote, “We must go through misery to get out of hell.”

Buried in the subconscious is a person we really may not want to know, what C. G. Jung called “the shadow,” in form of the opposite to that which is displayed in the conscious state. The shadow is all the repressed thoughts, feelings and concepts about ourselves that we do not want to face. Thus, the “saint” carries a “sinner” within, and vice versa. Perhaps, there is a nun inside every whore, a whore inside every nun, a rapist inside every priest, and a priest inside every rapist. St. Paul lamented he was a “wretched man” because, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. I myself in my (conscious) mind am a slave to God’s law, but in my (subconscious) sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.” (Romans 7:23-25) Necessary opposites. Once the shadow has been acknowledged, it loses its power to cause suffering.

Also, Paul was called to his ministry; he did not volunteer. Jesus declared, “This is the man I have chosen...I will show him how much he must suffer for my name.” (Acts 9:16) So, when you suffer, consider the source – GOD - and remember, as stated elsewhere, you are the clay and it is the potter – making some for royal use and some for common use. (Romans 9:21) Relief from suffering in this life apparently is not the will of GOD for everyone, because if it were, no one would suffer. This awareness of GOD as generator, operator, destroyer can only be described as awesome, an “out of this world” experience.

Dr. David Hawkins wrote, “Most people live their lives as though they're sleepers unawakened to the perception of who they really are – *a creation of GOD, generator, operator, destroyer*. In fact, they frequently do not know why they are doing what they are doing - *which must be the will of GOD as there can be no other*. People are terrified of facing themselves - *because they would see the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in each of us*. Many dread even a moment of aloneness *that would expose their subconscious contents*. Thus, the constant frantic

activities: the endless socializing, talking, texting, reading, music playing, working, traveling, sightseeing, shopping, overeating, gambling, movie-going, pill-taking, drug-using, and cocktail-partying. There is restlessness and the endless pursuit of “fun” activities to avoid the pain of facing our own inner self.” (Hawkins, David R., *Letting Go*, 2012 Hay House. Kindle Edition.) Thus, psychic pain must be evidence of inner work being done. All in GOD’s will of course.

The energy we project unconsciously through feelings returns to us like a boomerang through reflections from others through the law of reciprocity: What we project, we perceive. What we give, we receive, in the measure that we use as Jesus said – give love, receive love, give fear, receive fear, give hate, receive hate. Hence, peace and war, marriages and divorces, inner peace and suffering. This reaction is like an animal who encounters his image in a mirror and does not realize it is his own reflection. The highest levels of consciousness may be observed only in those few who achieve the spiritual perfection of nirvana, called “avatars” in Hinduism. All in GOD’s will of course.

Dr. Hawkins concluded, with the Buddha, that inner peace comes by accepting everything “as it is,” a feat that is beyond the natural tendency to oppose and to attack that which we will not accept. He likened life as being given a movie on DVD that contains the beginning and the ending and everything in between. Indeed, the whole universe could be depicted as such a DVD. Psychiatrist, Dr. Richard M. Bucke (*Cosmic Consciousness*, 1901) saw this spiritual awareness as the upper level of human evolution, which only a few ever achieve. Individually and collectively, it rises from physical instinct at birth to the ultimate universal being of cosmic consciousness – what he called the “radiant summit” – being in the world but not of the world and yet interconnected as One in the universe at the level of Spirit. This may be likened to a ship on the ocean, in the water but not of the water. It surpasses human achievements and may have been the meaning of novelist Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938), the youngest of eight siblings, who wrote, “You have reached the epitome of success when you are no longer interested in money, compliments, or publicity.” He died at age thirty-eight, after he was rich and famous of course. Jesus declared, “For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” (Matthew 23:12, Luke 14:11, 18:14) When? That is the question. C. G. Jung said faith, hope, love and insight are the highest achievements of the human development. Perhaps, astronauts in the orbiting space station may have such a perception of life on the earth from where there are no visible boundaries of separation to be seen among life forms on the planet – or even no life forms to be seen. This awareness seems to be a state of being we cannot achieve by serious effort on our own; it seems to be a gift to those few chosen to receive it through intuitive experience.

Consciousness does not create itself-it wells up from unknown depths. But, the masses created by GOD who are living at the lower levels of consciousness should not be rejected or judged, but merely loved and accepted because they also are doing GOD’s will in their own circumstances, living the lives they are given on their personal DVDs, including criminals, the poor and homeless, the famous and infamous. Theofatalism says nobody can help but be who they are, where they are, when they are in school, at home, at work, in church, in prison, in refugee camps, in hospitals, in nursing homes, mansions, or wherever. Resisting this conclusion can only cause you emotional pain, but if you must, you must. (Note: “*Emotions regulation and positive thinking to manage stress have gained popularity in modern psychology, but these are*

*old constructs traceable to ancient Stoic philosophy. To explore releasing negative emotions, visit www.sedona.com and read the referenced book titled, *Better Living, Better Dying.*)*

Further, C. G. Jung stated, “The greatest and most important problems of life are fundamentally unsolvable. They must be so, for they express the necessary polarity inherent in every self-regulating system. They can never be solved, but only outgrown.” It seems we are given problems to learn how to solve problems. The human brain even invents puzzles (jigsaw puzzles, crossword puzzles, murder mysteries, the Rubik’s Cube) to satisfy its need to solve problems. However, some people avoid puzzles and prefer to bypass problems instead of confronting them. For many people, this means ignoring problems and going on with life as though nothing happened – seeking happiness outside of themselves – called repression. “We divert our attention from disease and death as much as we can; and the slaughter-houses and indecencies without end on which our life is founded are huddled out of sight and never mentioned, so that the world we recognize officially in literature and in society is a poetic fiction far handsomer and cleaner and better than the world that really is.” (*James, William. The Varieties of Religious Experience: Complete and Unabridged (Illustrated) (p. 25). 1901 CrossReach Publications. Kindle Edition.*)

However, things are happening unconsciously inside that may display in unexpected ways outside. Celebrated author, Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961) said, “Life eventually breaks everyone, and some people grow stronger at the broken places.” But some things that are broken cannot be fixed, so we have divorces, cemeteries, junk yards and prisons. Hemingway committed suicide at the age of sixty-two. Classical artist, Vincent van Gogh, (1853-1890) who could not sell his paintings during his lifetime, committed suicide at the age of thirty-eight. Van Gogh was considered a madman and a failure in his lifetime. Now, his paintings are worth \$millions each. He became famous after his suicide as the quintessential misunderstood genius, the artist "where discourses on madness and creativity converge." He reportedly said, “To suffer without complaint is the only lesson we have to learn in this life.” All in GOD’s will, of course.

One might also mention the works of poet Emily Dickinson and novelist Jane Austen as examples of talents who were not fully recognized during their lifetimes. Newton’s law of gravity was not verified until seven decades after his death. The belief in theofatalism may not be confirmed until the time is right, regardless of any holy books that might be published. It is not about them or what they contain, but about the One source behind them, all of them. This is not about their content, but about how they are created, accepted, and promoted. (*Need I say it? All in GOD’s will of course. We can count the seeds in an apple but only GOD controls the number of apples in a seed.*)

The late British philosopher, James Allen wrote, “When, after much searching and suffering and sacrificing, the light of an eternal principle dawns upon the soul, a divine calm ensues and joy unspeakable gladdens the heart.” Nietzsche said truth always is on the side of the more difficult. But, the necessary opposite of Occam’s Razor seeks the solution in the simplest option. Instances of confusion are common among people who become dazzled by ideas too great or energies too powerful for their mental capacities to grasp and their personality to assimilate. The infant digests only milk until the child consumes soft food before the adult tolerates mature nutrients, and so it is with spiritual enlightenment. (1 Corinthians 3:1, Hebrews 5: 12-13) Dr. James Hollis wrote, “We are daily obliged to choose between anxiety

(fear of the future) and depression (grief for the past), which comes from being an animal who can become aware of just how thin the thread by which it hangs really is.” (*Swamplands of the Soul*, 1996, p.103) If there were no pain, how could we know pleasure? GOD did not make any one-sided coins. Some people get heads and some people get tails. This knowledge can be very stressful if you think about it. The universe is so big, and we seem to be small and powerless – yet, each one is both insignificant and indispensable to the whole, living in the here and now in mindfulness to experience life as it is. Just living life, one inhalation and one exhalation at a time without judging. If you live in the present, there is less to grieve about the past and less to fear about the future because it all must be GOD’s will or it would be different. For more details, visit. www.mindful.org.

The controversial theory of Dr. David Hawkins suggests that all human suffering is caused by negative feelings projected onto others and reflected back in like manner – chiefly apathy, depression, fear, grief and guilt, desire, anger, and pride, - and his solution is to identify them, surrender, and let them run out their natural course without resistance even if it takes hours, weeks, months or years, to be replaced naturally by courage, acceptance, love, and peace before “we” leave the body and let it return to the dust of its origin. (*Letting Go*, 2012) This must be an instantaneous process repeated endlessly until all “Isness” is replaced with nothing, and very few people climb very far up this ladder of consciousness. This inner journey does not seem to be designated for everyone. Jesus said the gate to eternal life is very small and the road to it is very narrow so only a few ever find it. (Matthew 7:14) By this definition, Dr. Hawkins concluded that war is a necessary part of human society which will continue until the end of this age according to Jesus, the driver of much scientific research and weapons development that convert to commercial use, (e.g., computers, Internet, and GPS,) and Adolph Hitler, who caused the deaths of millions of people in WWII, should be accepted if not loved because he was doing the will of GOD. Jesus said there would always be wars, but the end is yet to come. (Matthew 24:6, Mark 13:7) This prophecy probably is not much comfort to survivors of the Nazi genocide and families supporting disabled battle veterans. But, it must be GOD’s will or it would be different.

Things happen and thoughts and feelings result, and people react instinctively if they are driven by subconscious contents. Most therapies imply that you can access the subconscious mind to change thoughts to change feelings and change behavior, (whatever “you” are). But what if “you” do not control your own thoughts and feelings (whatever they are)?

There are literally hundreds of different religions practiced among the nearly eight billion people on earth. Mystical writer Abd-ru-shin (a.k.a. Oskar Bernhardt (1875–1941) who was big on free will, intuition, and personal volition declared in *The Grail Message*, (1941): “All teachings (thoughts, ideas, interpretations) were at one time willed by God, precisely adapted to the individual peoples and countries, and formed in complete accord with their actual spiritual maturity and receptivity.” If you were raised in Italy you probably are Catholic, if you were raised in Tennessee you probably are Baptist, if you were raised in India you probably are Hindu, if you were raised in China you may be Buddhist, Taoist, etc. GOD assumes many different forms among all the cultures on earth, and apparently it makes atheists also.

One of the greatest problems people face is the lack of practical integration between theological beliefs and daily living. Some of their religious teachings are downright incredible. Jesus told his disciples, “If you believe, you will receive whatever you ask for in prayer.” (Matthew 21:22) Many people who rely upon that promise are disappointed, but others continue to hope, which Nietzsche claimed was the worst of all evils because it “prolongs the torments of man.” Kathryn Greene-McCreight, a theologian and priest, described God as a large cat playing with a mouse during her “dark night of the soul,” living with lifelong depression. (*Darkness Is My Only Companion – A Christian Response to Mental Illness*, 2015)

Mother/Saint Teresa said, “GOD does whatever it wants with whoever it wants whenever it wants, and (sheeple) all must take what it gives and give what it takes.” She considered her lifelong mission to aid the poor of Calcutta as a drop of water in the ocean, but one the ocean would be less without. It appears that GOD creates poor people so others may perform charity because the Bible says, “If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me...the poor you will always have with you.” (Mathew 19:21, 26:11) “Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity.” (1 Corinthians 13:1-13 KJV) *Note: Charity is translated as love in the New International Version and most modern translations.*

Even the saints can fall short of this ideal. In her terminal illness, Saint Teresa wrote to Jesus, “If you treat everyone as you have treated me, no wonder you have so few friends....my soul is no longer one with you.” Her dark night, what Catholics call “spiritual dryness” and “the great desolation” lasted some fifty years, from 1948 to her death in 1997, according to her journals. This journey through darkness of the soul was described by St. John of the Cross in 1577-1585, in his poem, *The Dark Night* and two volumes of commentary, possibly while he was imprisoned. The Church claims that the light at the end of the dark night points to divine union with GOD, but it may take death to reach that goal because many people suffer in darkness all their lives until they die. F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) wrote, “In a real dark night of the soul, it is always three-o’clock in the morning.”

Theofatalism says whatever you believe and experience in life must be the will of GOD because there can be no other. We all must be who we are, saints and sinners, rich and poor, sick and healthy, predators and prey. Thus, theofatalism concludes that people and all other sentient beings on earth must be robots of GOD, believing and doing what they must. We all are sheeple, people, in board rooms, church rooms, school rooms, lunch rooms, living rooms, bath rooms, bed rooms, research labs, factories, and hospital operating rooms. Understand?

Concerning his discoveries in human psychology C. G. Jung said, “I do not have to believe because I know.” The mind perceives and reasons, but the heart knows. Breakthroughs, like discovery of theofatalism, often are very acute and dramatic, initiating opposition and rejection, including emotional and mental suffering when inferior beliefs must be abandoned and replaced with the new superior knowledge. Einstein noted, “Great spirits have always encountered violent opposition from mediocre minds.” Jonathan Swift declared, “When a true genius appears, you can know him by this sign: that all the dunces are in a confederacy against

him.” (Cohen, Alan. *A Course in Miracles Made Easy* (p. 15). Hay House, 2015 Kindle Edition.) C. G. Jung wrote, “I made many enemies. A creative person has little power over his own life. He is not free. He is captive and driven by his daimon. There is something heart-rending about that.” (*Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, 1973) It is dangerous for discoverers of breakthroughs to challenge established traditions or to threaten digestive limits. It possibly can even be life-threatening.

And so it is with theofatalism, which postulates in every life, there is only one way, GOD’s way. Helen Schucman, scribe of *A Course in Miracles* (ACIM,) wrote, “When you have learned how to decide with God, all decisions become as easy and as right as breathing. There is no effort and you will be led as gently as if you were being carried down a quiet pathway in summer.” Of ACIM, she said, “I know it is true, but I just don’t believe it.” She decided to accept untimely death by pancreatic cancer saying, “I must die to get out of it way.” Whatever you do or don’t do, think or don’t think, feel or don’t feel, moment by moment and step by step, is the only thing for you as there can be no other. Theofatalism is the ultimate absolute infinite explanation for what is – from atoms to galaxies. Whether you believe this or not is the right choice for you also. As with the law of gravity, you can ignore it, but you cannot avoid your destiny.

Scripture says there may be nothing new under the Sun; it is all there waiting to be discovered and used – possibly stored in some as yet undiscovered astral plane or the “collective unconscious” proposed by C. G. Jung – scarcely different from the Akashic Records in Hindu mythology. (Ecclesiastes 1:8-10) Dr. William Ferraiolo wrote, “Each of us is faced with a set of initial circumstances to which we did not consent. Events transpire within and without our bodies, and these shape us neurologically, biochemically, psychologically, and in innumerable other respects that determine our beliefs, desires, aversions, attitudes, proclivities, etc. These all jointly culminate in decisions and actions. Thus, one becomes a cheat, a liar, a coward, a hero, a stalwart, or what have you. To develop sincere appreciation for being born in a brutal world not of your making, to struggle and fail time and time again, to feel repeatedly lost, bewildered, frustrated, and hopeless, to swim in this ocean of misery, and, ultimately, to drown in it; this is the beginning of wisdom.” (*Meditations on Self Discipline and Failure*, 2017, p.163) C. G. Jung said life is an experiment we did not set up, and neither the beginning nor the ending are ours to command.

The human psyche/soul is a bottomless pit, and there always is something more to learn. But, beware of consuming too much knowledge that stresses your limits of absorption. The great King, Solomon said it was chasing after the wind. “With much wisdom comes much sorrow; the more knowledge, the more grief.” (Ecclesiastes 1:17-18) What you don’t know cannot hurt you, ignorance is bliss, etc. C. G. Jung observed that some discoveries during mystical enlightenment can produce ego inflation. “The inflation has nothing to do with the kind of knowledge, but simply and solely with the fact that any new knowledge can so seize hold of a weak head that he no longer sees and hears anything else. He is hypnotized by it and instantly believes he has solved the riddle of the universe.” Dr. Hollis says, “A problem occurs when the ego thinks it is separate from nature and nature replies, no you are not.” So, perhaps it is healthy not to think too much about GOD because you might go mad trying to absorb the infinite that is above and beyond human understanding. Just live the life that you are given until it ends. You will anyway. One Zen proverb says, “Before enlightenment you chopped wood

and carried water; after enlightenment, chop wood and carry water.” However, Oliver Wendell Holmes wrote, “A mind that is stretched to a new idea never returns to its original dimensions.”

Summary

In summary, after watching his wife die untimely from a decade of breast cancer, Lewis Tagliaferre was thrust into a religious and spiritual crisis when his traditional church could not provide any comfort. He began a search for recovery from complicated grief and depression, seeking inner peace through reading, therapy, journaling, and mental health treatment. His study of the Bible led to the need for a belief that goes beyond the standard dogma and explains the normal suffering among all sentient beings. His search led him to the vision of GOD as generator, operator, destroyer – the prime force in the universe, controller of everything from atoms to galaxies. It is derived from Biblical scriptures, Hindu beliefs, the philosophy of causal determinism, and theological fatalism; called theofatalism. This belief helps to explain situations in life that people pay little attention to until a crisis hits, including suffering from natural disasters and human behavior, but which occur continually among plants, animals, and humans. It also accommodates all other beliefs, including atheism because theofatalism says nothing happens outside the will of GOD, from atoms to galaxies. This belief challenges the assumption of human free will, which is presented as a necessary illusion at this time in human evolution, because the conscious mind is driven by contents of the subconscious mind. Theofatalism emphasizes living mindfully and serenely surrendering to here and now instant by instant because living in the past invites depression and living in the future invites anxiety.

Tagliaferre chose as the symbol of theofatalism, the Chartres Labyrinth, which is different from a maze that is meant to confuse and frustrate. The labyrinth presents a pathway for each person to walk, from birth out into the world and back again to the Source in the center. There are no options in the labyrinth walk of life because the journey of each person must follow the pathway that is given to them in four quadrants of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual energies. This pathway is within and may be established before birth by the will of GOD. As such, there are no mistakes, only predestined decisions with inevitable consequences presented as learning experiences, all connected as links in a chain of the gigantic tapestry that makes up life among all the species on planet earth.

The belief in theofatalism comes with five general principles of reality and five steps of response. Together, they comprise a new form of treatment for religious and spiritual problems called © Radical Accommodation Therapy. This development provides a new and different way of managing the Religious and Spiritual Problem defined in the psychiatric manual of diagnosis, DSM-V. It may help to understand and manage the stress which comes through challenges to faith, “the dark night of the soul,” offering a pathway to more resilience and inner peace in the spiritual realm when trust in traditional religion is impotent and unable to defend suffering people from mortal threats to survival. Through his personal journey of more than three decades, Tagliaferre wrote several books that discuss life and death on earth from the perspective of theofatalism. He offers this work to pastors, therapists, and suffering souls who may find in it a new way of accommodating life as it is. All in GOD’s will, of course. AIGWOC

DESIDERATA

“Go placidly amid the noise and haste and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant for they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive people because they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself to others you may become vain and bitter; there will always be greater and lesser people than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your career however humble, it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is. Many people strive for high ideals and everywhere life is full of heroism.

“Be yourself. (*Those who matter will not mind, and those who mind do not matter.*) Especially do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and stars, you have a right to be here. And, whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore, be at peace with God whatever you conceive Him to be. Whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its sham, drudgery and broken dreams it still is a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.” Amen.

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